(c) the special steps taken by Government of safeguard the interests of local people effected by extraction of the gold; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) The Geological Survey of India (GSI) has reported occurrences of gold around Sonadehi, Kumarkatta-Parvelli-Gurpher, Sheetalpur-Bheldapani-Bazhar-Chancher and Puro-Michgaon Blocks in Baster region of Chhattisgarh. The investigations carried out so far have only indicated presence of low-grade gold ore, which may not be economically viable to mine.

(c) and (d) As no mining activity has been initiated, the question does not arise.

Increased activities of Pakistani and Chinese Armies on Border

†4393. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that besides the activities of the Pakistani Army, activities of the Chinese Army have also increased on the Indian Border after the bitterness crept in the Indo-Pak relations;

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government in this direction; and

(c) the results thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) There are no reports to indicate any increase in activities of the Chinese Army on the Indian border.

Brahmos Missile

4394. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian and Russia have jointly developed the Brahmos missile;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when, it will be inducted into the armed forces?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. India and Russia have undertaken design and development of most advanced supersonic cruise missile 'BRAHMOS' under a Joint Venture company.

(c) The first flight test took place on 12th June, 2001 and another successful flight was conducted on 28th April, 2002. The development flight trials will be further progressed in 2002 and 2003. The production will commence by end of 2003 for induction in 2004.

MIG-21 Aircrash in Jodhpur, Rajasthan

4395. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an Indian Air Force MIG-21 aircraft crashed on 13th December, 2001 shortly before landing at a forward airbase, 70 km. from Jodhpur, Rajasthan;

(b) if so, whether inspite of giving assurances, number of MIG-21 crashes have taken place during December, 2001 to January, 2002;

(c) if so, what are the main reasons for air crash of MIG-21;

(d) whether any inquiry has been conducted; and

(e) if so, what are the steps Government propose to take to prevent the MIG-21 air crashes which are taking place on a considerable rate for several years?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) During the months of December, 2001 and January, 2002 only one MIG-21 aircraft accident took place.

(c) Human Error (HE), Technical Defect (TD) and Bird Hit (B.H.) have been identified as the main causes of accidents by various Courts of Inquiry.